Empire of the Southwest

BY FREDERIC J. HASKIN.

Oklahoma City, Okla., Nov. 6.—A million good Americans each year are swelling the population of the great Southwest. They come from the older and more crowded agricultural States into this great, wide country. They are building an empire richer than has ever been erected on a foundation of blood and heroes. They are the conquerors of peace, and their weapons are work and intelligence. Texas, the most wonderful of States, is the promised land to a large proportion of these homeseekers. Oklahoma invites them all, and hundreds of thousands have accepted since the good year 1907 began. Each alternate Tuesday the railroads run special trains, to accommodate thousands who have taken advantage of special "homeseekers' rates" to see the Southwest.

Railroad managements may be guilty of many sins for which they deserve punishment, but it is not less true that they should be given the credit for many acts of virtue. No section in the country is more strict in its regulation of the railroads than the Southwest. The Interstate Commerce Commission was developed from an idea which first saw the light of the forum in Texas. The constitution of the new State of Oklahoma goes far beyond all previous records in assuming control and direction of railroad affairs.

Yet the railroads must be given the credit for the founding of this new empire. They have pushed their sinuous paths across the trackless plains, which covered their riches under the cloak of a desert. As the railroads advanced, towns and cities arose. The desert cloak was ripped off, and there lay millions of acres of fertile land, awaiting the tiller of the soil. The railroads knew that this country must have people if it was to make business. Therefore they have sent agents to tell the farmers of other States of the fortunes awaiting them here. They have given them cheap tickets if they desired to have a look. The railroads have spent thousands and thousands of dollars advertising the glories and opportunities of the Southwest. Their reward is in the traffic, which is now greater than they can handle, developed from a country not two decades old.

At the Oklahoma State fair a farmer, Vincent Anderson, occupied 1,200 square feet of space with the exhibit of his single farm. He has 240 acres within ten miles of Oklahoma City. Last month he showed no less than 312 varieties of farm products which he had grown this season on that one farm. And there were five crops of alfalfa from the same ground and two crops of potatoes, the first yielding 125 bushels to the acre and the second between 80 and 100 bushels.

Oklahoma already ranks sixth among the cotton producing States. It will soon rise higher in the list. In the Indian Territory cotton has been grown for more than sixty years. In Oklahoma proper it is quite a new thing. Oklahoma was settled by Texans, who imagined they were going too far north for cotton, and by Kansans and Missourians, who never thought of cotton as a crop. A Kansas negro politician established a negro town near Guthrie and peopled it with members of his race from Georgia. The town was a failure, and the Georgia negroes shifted about the neighboring country. One old "mammy" had brought a handful of cotton seeds from her Southern home. She planted them, that she might have a little cotton "jes' to look at." The plants were so thrifty that some of the negroes persuaded a Guthrie man to buy some cotton seed. Thus the cotton planting began. This year the crop will be worth more than $30,000,000.

An experimenter planted some broomcorn seed a few years ago. The success was quite wonderful, and it was found that the soil was peculiarly adapted to the plant. Already Oklahoma produces more broom corn than any other State, and the growers sell their product at prices which are very profitable. Peanuts are beginning to receive much attention, and it has been discovered that some lands will produce more dollars to the acre in peanuts than in any other crop. Therefore, the peanut business is on a decided boom, not only in Oklahoma, but in Texas. In the Lone Star State Bill Sterret has concealed himself behind the breastworks of the "State press," in the Dallas News, and is leading the hosts of the peanut boomers on to certain victory.

The Elberta peach has displayed such a fondness for Oklahoma soil that it is in imminent danger of being re-christened "the Oklahoma peach." Apples are grown extensively, and some of the best orchards in the Southwest are to be found in Oklahoma. This year, however, the old State of Arkansas is wearing the apple-growing medal, the value of which is measured in millions of dollars.

But not in agriculture and horticulture does Oklahoma place all her faith. Her mineral wealth is beginning to be developed. Her coal and oil and gas fields are not to be surpassed in the country. This means fuel in plenty, and while few factories have come as yet, the citizens of the new empire believe that it is but a matter of waiting a few years until Oklahoma will spin her own cotton, pack her own cattle, make her own brooms, and provide markets in manufacturing towns for her own garden produce.

Nearly forty years ago, when the Indians were hunting scalps instead of college degrees, and when the plow share had not yet cut the virgin soil of this new State, an officer of the United States army and a company of five scouts were crossing the plains about seventy-five miles west of what is now Oklahoma City. They were surprised by a band of a hundred Indians, who were on the warpath. A desperate fight and a desperate race ensued. Four of the white men were killed. The officer and one of the scouts reached the mouth of a deep ravine, rode into it and found refuge under an overhanging cliff of white rock. The scout, Amos Chapman, was wounded and had to suffer the amputation of a leg. He is still in that section of the country.

The army officer went back to the East and told a friend of the fight. Then he added: "I believe the ravine where we hid and the hills for miles around are almost solid pure gypsum." His friend was a gypsum miner, but for many years he gave the matter no thought. Then came the opening of the new country. The gypsum miner remembered the army officer's story. He set out, and he found the gypsum, the greatest and purest deposit in the world. The army officer was Nelson A. Miles, now retired, lieutenant-general and sometime ranking officer of the American army.

After the day of Miles' fight with the Indians, these gypsum caves became the hiding place for bands of outlaws and bank robbers. Here the famous Dalton gang hid and defied the officers of the law to take them. Other thieves and "bad men" made their homes under those white cliffs and sallied forth to pillage to towns which were springing up as the vanguard of civilization reached out to the westward.

Three ranges of hills running across the State were known to the cowboys as the "gyp hills." Two ledges of white gypsum, forty feet thick and 300 miles long, justify the name, and mean much for the future of the western section of the State. Already there is a great number of mills, five of them clustered about Gen. Miles' place of refuge, which are calcining the rock into pure plaster of paris. There is so much gypsum here that these five mills would require a little over 40,000 years to exhaust the supply, which has been estimated by geologists at 125,000,000,000 tons. The use of plaster of paris is being extended every day. These mills in Oklahoma can load the plaster on the cars for $1.65 a ton, total cost. The plaster is sold within 100 miles for as much as $11 a ton. There ought to be money in the gypsum business.

In the southwestern portion of the State a great source of possible wealth is found in the salt springs. These produce enough salt water, natural flow, to make 400,000 gallons of salt a day. A few primitive plants have been operated to obtain this salt, some by solar evaporation and some by boiling, but it has practically all gone to waste. A concern is now beginning to develop these salt wells along modern lines.

In the Indian Territory are found mines of rock asphalt much greater in extent than any heretofore known. This asphalt is being used to pave the streets of towns in the neighborhood, but Oklahoma City is using Trinidad lake asphalt, because of the paving combination, and the fact that no capital has been invested to develop the mines of the new State. Ardmore has streets paved with material mined in the immediate vicinity, and it is declared by paving men that no town has better streets than Ardmore. Beds of asphalt a hundred feet wide, five miles long and of unknown depth have been found by the score.

The coal mines of the Indian Territory are of great importance. Their production is large enough to place Oklahoma high in the list of coal-producing States even now, and it is estimated by geologists that not more than 2 per cent of the field has been exploited. As a great and growing country to the west and southwest will look to these mines for fuel, the economic value of the Indian Territory coal fields is very great.

Oklahoma proper will be an agricultural section, and her farms will be her greatest wealth. The Indian Territory has many good farms, but its greatest riches lie in its mines. Thus the new State will have two distinct sections, the eastern devoted principally to mining and the western to agriculture. The one will profit from the other, and with a population increasing at the rate of a quarter of a million a year from American immigration, the future of a new-born empire with such wonderful resources cannot be anything but glorious.

To-morrow—Makes Its Own History.

PLACES OF INTEREST.

Library of Congress—Open 9 a. m. to 10 p. m. on secular days; from 2 p. m. to 10 p. m. on Sundays and on certain holidays.
Public Library—Open 9 a. m. to 9 p. m.; holidays, 10 a. m. to 10 p. m.; Sundays, 2 to 10 p. m.
Executive Mansion—Open 10 a. m. to 2 p. m.
United States Capitol—Open 9 a. m. to 4:30 p. m.
United States Treasury—Open 9 a. m. to 2 p. m.
State, War and Navy Departments—Open 9 a. m. to 2 p. m. (The original Declaration of Independence is in the Library of the State Department.)
United States Patent Office—Open 9 a. m. to 2 p. m.
United States Pension Bureau—Open 9 a. m. to 4 p. m.
United States Post-office—Open 9 a. m. to 2 p. m.
Washington City Post-office—Open all hours. (The Dead Letter Office is in the city post-office.)
National Botanic Gardens—Open 8 a. m. to 5 p. m.
Fish Commission—Open 9 a. m. to 4:30 p. m.
Army Medical Museum—Open 9 a. m. to 4:30 p. m.
National Museum—Open 9 a. m. to 4:30 p. m. (including holidays).
Smithsonian Institution—Open 9 a. m. to 4:30 p. m. (including holidays).
Agricultural Department—Open 9 a. m. to 4:30 p. m.
Bureau of Engraving and Printing—Open 9 a. m. to 2:30 p. m.
Washington Monument (555½ feet in height)—Open 8:30 a. m. to 4:30 p. m. (Elevator runs from 9 a. m. until 4 p. m.)
Corcoran Gallery of Art—Open 9:30 a. m. to 4 p. m. in winter; 9 a. m. to 4 p. m. in summer. Sundays—1:30 p. m. to 5 p. m., excepting in midsummer. Admission free on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays, and Sundays; other days, 25c admission.
Government Printing Office—Open 10 a. m. to 2 p. m.
Navy Yard—Open 9 a. m. to 5:30 p. m.
Southworth Cottage, 36th st. and Prospect ave.

IN THE SUBURBS.

Zoological Park—Open all day.
Rock Creek Bridge and Park.
Chevy Chase, Kensington, and Chesapeake Beach.
Naval Observatory—Open 9 a. m. to 3 p. m.
Mount Vernon, the home and tomb of Washington—Open 11 a. m. to 5 p. m.
Arlington National Cemetery—Open all day.
United States Soldiers' Home—Open 9 a. m. to sunset.
Cathedral Grounds, Tennallytown road—Open 8 a. m. to 6 p. m.
Cabin John Bridge, Catholic University, and Alexandria.

PIANO PLAYERS' CONCERT.

Two Celebrated Artists Coming to Washington.

Ernest Hutcheson, Australian pianist, and Harold Randolph, director of the Peabody Conservatory of Baltimore, will appear at the Columbia Theater next Tuesday afternoon, November 12, in one of their ensemble piano concerts, which have been arousing the interest of the musical centers of the East.

These two splendid players are responsible for the revival of the lost art of ensemble playing in America, and the performances they have been giving in the East have been striking examples of what can be done in the hands of two artists so splendidly endowed with technical finesse, and who play in such thorough union and sympathy and spontaneous dynamic thoroughness. Tickets for the concert now on sale at T. Arthur Smith's, 1411 F street northwest.

A SHIRT WAIST IN FANCY WOOL.

Some of the new wool fabrics are very fetching in shirt waists for everyday wear, and when cut by a good model and well made are exceedingly smart. The waist shown is particularly attractive, though extremely simple in construction. The wide tucks on the shoulders and the trim front-closing need no other adornment than a machine stitching, while the plain ba[illegible] requires no decorati[illegible] kind. The modish sleeves are of full length and of tailored finish. The medium size calls for 3 1-2 yards of 24-inch material. Seven sizes, 32 to 44 inches, bust measure.

A pattern of this may be obtained by inclosing 10 cents in stamps and addressing Pattern Department, The Washington Herald, 734 Fifteenth street northwest, [illegible] number (2690) and size wanted. [illegible] Sunday afternoon. He [illegible] ment opposite, noting t[illegible]

THE IRON LORD

By S. R. CROCKETT.

Author of "The Stickit Minister," "The Raiders," "The White Plume," &c.

Synopsis of Previous Chapters.

The story opens at the home of Jacob Romer, of Gorm House, on the Frith of Cantyre. He is a ship owner and mine owner and very rich. Wanting to be rid of his wife, Caroline, he has intrusted the task to his brother, Thomas, of getting her incarcerated in an insane asylum. This fails because of the testimony of Jacob's daughter Vida, who, however, cannot believe that she is really his daughter. Jacob sends one of his ships after them, but The Good Intent is wrecked and Vida and her mother thrown ashore. Vida renounces her father and becomes Vida Bryan, the adopted daughter of "Billy" Bryan, the keeper of one of the coast lights. James Kahn, supercargo and confidential man of Jacob Romer, is scheming to get possession of the Romer mines and millions. In the meantime, Vida is living happily at Kirktown and two swains are attentive to her, Phil Calmont and Vic Morris.

CHAPTER IX.

The Love-madness of Jacob Romer.

No, Jacob Romer had never loved a woman. In his youth, now so long ago, it had seemed a convenient thing at the time that he should marry Caroline French. He had felt himself slipping—too many evenings out, a tendency to force the pace, to play cards for sums that he could not afford, or rather, which he would not afford lest it should come to the ears of his uncle.

He never had much sentiment, this young Jacob Romer, nor yet a very strong bent either toward good or evil. But first, second, and all the time, he meant to succeed, to stand heir to his uncle, to become a rich man, holding the lives of thousands in his hands. He watched the great dignitaries of the county visiting Thorsby, and while he chuckled with the notion that his uncle could buy them all up—lock, stock and barrel—he admired them, too.

They had what the rich Mr. Gorm never had—a certain quiet, assured certainty of themselves. Their carriages were sometimes shabby, but they sat them like thrones. They had been their fathers' before them. Nevertheless, with the quick wit of the born successful man, he saw that the time was coming, if it had not already arrived, when money would admit even to that society—that is, if the moneyed person were at all decently presentable. His uncle Gorm, with his broad Thorsby accent, was out of the running, but it was different with Jacob. True, he had never been to college. His uncle believed in the yard and the counting-house more than Oxford and Cambridge, and the earlier the better. Still, he felt that he could hold his own.

It chanced that one day, returning from his afternoon walk into the country lanes about Green-lane Common, he passed a little red-freestone porch—a schoolhouse during the week, a church and Sunday school on the Sabbath. This was Sunday, though Thorsby was near enough the Scottish border to use the Judaeic name quite frequently. The classes were coming out, and the eyes of Jacob Romer caught a tall, palish girl, with a swarm of children about her, emerging into the street. She was like a queen bee with her hiving cluster.

"Miss French!—oh, wait, Miss French!" they called after her.

And with a smile, the tall young teacher turned and waited. A little girl, two little girls, and then three or four toddlers all came out shouting on Miss French to wait for them. In baby accents they lisped it—they squeaked it like young animals. They fell flat and picked themselves up without crying, so eager were they to reach the object of their adoration.

Jacob Romer saw it all. He did not know the young teacher, but it would be the easiest thing in the world to find out who she was. However, he would, as he said, "do a bit of thinking first."

And that thinking he did during the week. He held himself aloof from his comrades, with their talk of cards and racing, their strong waters and cheap wickedness—that is, till Friday, when he went to the Thorsby Steeplechase and lost £40, not all of which was his to lose.

He was a thief. If caught, his uncle would send him impitiably to prison. It was not so much the money he had to make up which troubled him, but the sudden revelation of his own weakness. When upon the spreading green of the race course he saw the fleet horses, heard the beat of galloping hoofs, and sniffed the powdery dust, keen with ammonia, about the weighing paddock, somehow he lost control of himself. He loved a horse, and with the strange perversity of those who attach themselves to that most simple-minded of four-footed creatures, this narrow, self-contained, money-making youth grew wild at the sight of half a dozen horses stretching over the sward toward the goal. He was a "straight" gambler, always backing his favorite, calling out odds when the jockeys in scarlet and rose and orange took their horses to the starting post—nay, even during the race itself. He was mad, for the time being, and that night he had a vision of how it was going to finish. He saw himself in a prison yard, padding the hoof in a long procession of convicts, all in suits marked with the broad arrow.

The morning of the day after the race Jacob Romer, pale with sleeplessness, took some papers down to a little shyster lawyer in East Dene, to whom he was known, and came out again with money in his pocket—but money for which he had paid a price that beaded his brow only to think upon. However, his cash balanced when at 12:30 on Saturday, that very afternoon in fact, his Uncle Gorm came to cast the eye that was never yet cheated over his nephew's accounts.

When Mr. Gorm went Jacob Romer drew a long breath and sat down at his desk, with the simulacrum of a task before him. But instead he bit the bone handle of his pen, and thought—thought—only thought.

Yes, it must stop. This was the end. But down within him very deep, solemn as a knell, the words rang from heart to brain and from brain to heart, say from will to desire and from desire to will: "You will do it again; you will do it again!"

And Jacob Romer, iron-willed and ice-cold in every other direction, knew that he would. That is, unless——

The next day, which was Sunday, found him pacing up and down before that little Thorsby Sunday school. He was communing with himself.

"Married men have not these temptations; married men go home quietly at night. They read, they study. They have regular meals, which is already something. They have a reason for keeping straight—wife and children, home and position. Jacob Romer, it is the gaol or the altar, my friend! Better marry than get a life sentence for forgery—for that is how it will end."

Never, perhaps, was the course of a man's life—and incidentally, also, a woman's—so coldly determined. Jacob Romer took to marriage as he would have resolved to follow a disagreeable but necessary course of medical treatment. After all, the cure was the thing. He would regenerate himself—he, Jacob Romer. God was not in all his thoughts—not the God within him, the Speaking Spirit which is in every man. He ruled Him out. Jacob Romer took all the credit. "I will do it," he said. "I—I—I——!"

But for all that Jacob Romer was above all things a man of action, and he showed [illegible] at Sunday afternoon. He paced the [illegible] children racing and tumbling as to a feast, in the direction of the Sunday school. Others (boys mostly) were led to the door by anxious parents, only to escape, at the last moment, on the wings of the wind, in the direction of the river and the ships.

The teachers began to arrive, his pale, tall girl one of the first. She remained, however, only long enough to lay a wrap and some books within, and was out again to commence her house-to-house visitation. She plunged down an alley, caught three dirty urchins, and debouched into the main road with a growing tail. So that when she reached the school house she was at the head of a procession of seven girls and four boys, all well under the age of six. She must be, of a certainty, the teacher of the infant class. That, thought Jacob Romer, betokened domesticity. It was a good augury. Still better the next.

The tall girl disappeared for a moment after a pause, in which it was manifest that she was delivering a little lecturette. The uplifted forefinger, menacing, said as much. Though Jacob could see that it intimidated nobody. Good again! No self-will. She would do as Jacob Romer ordered. He should have no difficulties of any kind. Better for him if she had.

Presently the infant mistress reappeared. She bore a cake of soap, a sponge, while a rough towel was over her arm. Then the line of small five-year-olders began to swerve and dodge. They got one behind the other. There were cries of "Come out o' that, you Joe!" "Please, mother, washed me juss 'fore I come! She did, indeed, ma'am!"

But nothing availed. In a very business-like way, and as one used to the task, the tall girl called them forward one by one, and, in spite of their protests, washed (or re-washed) her flock, paying special attention to the eyes, all screwed up into twists for fear of soap. Furthermore, she behaved like a very Stanley in the trackless wastes of Darkest Africa behind their ears.

Still, no one cried, and not one refused the ordeal. Indeed, each stood to attention so soon as their own scrubbing was done, and enjoyed to the full the sufferings of their comrades, as good, little Sunday school children ought to do.

"Good and better!" thought Jacob Romer, as he halted a moment on his heel to peer through the gate of the playground. Whereupon a tall boy, acting the part of janitor and magnifying his office, shut the door in his face; but Jacob, for once nothing angered, only murmured. "She has enough firmness to manage children. What can a man wish for more?"

He congratulated himself that he was not the prey to any foolish sentiment, such as ignorant and youthful persons call "love." He never did anything more calmly in his life. He was suffering from a disease, that was all. He had diagnosed it, he had found the remedy, and now he was going to apply it.

He stepped all the way to the corner of the road where Newcastle Highway ran along and straight to the horizon, with its length almost clear of the week-day traffic of wagons, and the pavements only encumbered by a few Sunday strollers and belated school children in their best array.

He discovered that the street was named Ryan street, and so by a simple reasoning process the building which interested him would be called Ryan Street Sunday School.

"Good," he said, after a little, "I will go and look up that superintendent."

He fumbled in his pockets for a card. His name was a good introduction in Thorsby and the neighborhood. People were wont to look twice at a card with "Jacob Incubus Gorm Romer" upon it. He heard the hymn rise and fall, the scuffling hush of the prayer. Then to his ear came the scurry and drumming clatter of the classes dismissing to their work. He let this settle a bit, and then strolled to the door. With a roll book and a sheaf of papers in his hand, the superintendent—a small, eager, black-eyed man—was bolting across the little bricked courtyard when Jacob stopped him, big and strong.

"You are the superintendent of Ryan Street Sunday School?" he asked. The quick, bird-like little man nodded, caught in mid-stride and slowly letting the arrested front foot sink to the ground. Jacob put the card back in his pocket.

"Then, since we are face to face," he said, "I need not trouble you with this piece of pasteboard. I am Mr. Jacob Incubus Gorm Romer——"

"Ah," said the superintendent, flushing, "the nephew of——"

"Precisely," Jacob cut him short, recognizing him as a clerk and collector under the Thorsby board of guardians. "I have been much interested in your work here, having to pass this way to my uncle's offices from my rooms——"

"Ah, indeed! Delighted! What can I do for you?"

The superintendent scented afar off a subscription for struggling Ryan Street, and the nephew of their ground landlord was certainly not to be bowed to the door like the first comer.

"Would you like to see our work in action, sir?"

Jacob would, and in a minute he was being introduced to Miss French, "who so ably and conscientiously teaches our infant class." As they went out, Jacob, as if impressed by the long array of awe-struck chubby faces of all now clean, remarked: "That is a difficult task; who did you say was the young lady teacher?"

"She is a Miss French," said the superintendent. "Her father is a retired country postmaster and schoolmaster. She has been well brought up, sir, and lives in Cliff square."

"So I see, so I see," said Jacob, meditatively.

He glanced at the other departments, said some kind things as to arrangements, asked the superintendent to allow him to send him a cheque in aid of the funds, and got away, much more expeditiously than the superintendent had expected. He thought he had captured a sympathetic listener for the whole hour and a half. He might even be persuaded to give them a little "closing address." The superintendent was always on the lookout for new material of that sort.

But Jacob was gone, and Ryan Street saw him no more, though he sent the cheque in due time—ill as, at the moment, he could afford it.

But he found his way to Cliff square. He met Miss French on the Newcastle road and, claiming acquaintance, walked home with her, asking questions about her class. Her home proved to be a little eight-and-six-penny cottage belonging to his uncle's firm, which, but for the cheapness of the rent and the fact that it was attached to a similar one on either side, would fain have called itself a "villa," and so had its rent raised to ten-and-six.

Jacob was pleased with the ex-schoolmaster, equally so with his wife, both frail old folks. They were wrapped up in their daughter. Neither mixed with the neighbors, hardly knowing them, even by sight, so carefully had they "kept themselves to themselves."

When he got out and was pacing slowly back, Jacob, who ever say any difficulties and always looked well ahead, murmured only to himself: "Wood Green—yes, Wood Green would do!"

And it turned out so. Step by step, as he planned the matter, the young man's imperious will drove the thing through. It was manifestly impossible to say a word to his uncle, who woud have cut him off for a young fool making a misalliance. But Jacob knew better. He was no fool. He knew very well what he was doing. Wood Green was a little hamlet where property was cheap, three miles from Thorsby, but there was a railway station quite convenient. In the summer Jacob had the choice of returning by steamer to a pier within easy walking distance. Above all, it was also on the "other side of the water" from his terrible uncle.

As for the feelings of Caroline French, or her future interests, these did not matter. She was a step in the advancement of Jacob Romer. That, doubtless, should be sufficient for her.

TO BE CONTINUED TO-MORROW.

AMUSEMENTS.

AMUSEMENTS.

The Largest Morning Circulation.

All advertising contracts made by The Washington Herald are based upon its sworn circulation—a circulation in Washington larger by thousands than was ever before attained by any morning newspaper at the Capital. Its books are open.